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21 February 1953

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DOS review(s) completed.

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GENERAL

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2. Stalin displays indifference to India's Korean proposals in Menon talk:

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According to statements of Indian Ambassador K. P. S. Menon, Stalin failed to use their interview to advance new proposals on Korea and showed little interest in Menon's exposition of

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India's UN resolution. He referred to the question of the US Seventh Fleet and Formosa as an example of the difficulty of dealing with Americans.

While agreeing with Menon's suggestion that "there were many good Americans," Stalin observed that "unfortunately, the US was governed by profit motives." The US Embassy adds that British Commonwealth representatives in Moscow have remarked on Stalin's "apparent obsession that capitalism is blocking world peace."

Comment: The interview with the Indian Ambassador may have been intended to mollify Indian resentment over Soviet rejection of India's UN resolution. Stalin's indifference to the discussion of Korean issues suggests continued Soviet intransigence on the repatriation question.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Egypt will not insist on "unconditional" evacuation of Suez Canal:

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The Egyptian Foreign Minister and a member of the High Committee in charge of negotiations with Britain have assured the American Embassy that Egypt will not deliver a note demanding "unconditional" British evacuation of the Suez Canal zone.

Ambassador Caffery also reports that Egyptian leaders have agreed to make no further public statements on the Sudan or on evacuation pending the development of forthcoming defense negotiations.

Comment: It was earlier reported that the High Committee was planning to demand British agreement to unconditional evacuation prior to negotiations. It now appears that the Egyptian leaders hope to create an atmosphere favorable for arranging gradual withdrawal of British troops from the canal zone.

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EASTERN EUROPE

5. Hungarian Politburo member reportedly commits suicide:

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Two independent, usually reliable sources have reported the suicide of Politburo member Zoltan Vas, former director of the Hungarian Planning Office. The American Legation in Budapest believes that the report is probably true.

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Comment: Zoltan Vas, who is Jewish and an old friend of Premier Rakosi, was removed from his position as head of the Planning Office on 2 February and assigned as production chief of the Komlo coal mines, which in 1952 reached only 30 percent of their production goals.

Vas is thus far the only Politburo member known to have been affected by the current Hungarian purge, which otherwise has been limited to present and former Jewish officials of the Security Police.